

## CLAIMS

We claim:

1. An isolated polypeptide, comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:2.
2. An isolated nucleic acid molecule that encodes a zsell polypeptide, wherein the nucleic acid molecule is selected from the group consisting of:
  - (a) a nucleic acid molecule comprising the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:3; and
  - (b) a nucleic acid molecule encoding the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:2.
3. The isolated nucleic acid molecule of claim 2, comprising the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:1.
4. A vector, comprising the isolated nucleic acid molecule of claim 2.
5. An expression vector, comprising the isolated nucleic acid molecule of claim 2, a transcription promoter, and a transcription terminator, wherein the promoter is operably linked with the nucleic acid molecule, and wherein the nucleic acid molecule is operably linked with the transcription terminator.
6. A recombinant host cell comprising the expression vector of claim 5, wherein the host cell is selected from the group consisting of bacterium, yeast cell, fungal cell, insect cell, mammalian cell, and plant cell.
7. A method of using the expression vector of claim 5 to produce zsell protein, comprising culturing recombinant host cells that comprise the expression vector and that produce the zsell protein.
8. The method of claim 7, further comprising isolating the zsell protein from the cultured recombinant host cells.
9. An antibody or antibody fragment that specifically binds with the polypeptide of claim 1.

10. The antibody of claim 9, wherein the antibody is selected from the group consisting of: (a) polyclonal antibody, (b) murine monoclonal antibody, (c) humanized antibody derived from (b), and (d) human monoclonal antibody.

11. A method of detecting the presence of *zsell* gene expression in a biological sample, comprising:

(a) contacting a *zsell* nucleic acid probe under hybridizing conditions with either (i) test RNA molecules isolated from the biological sample, or (ii) nucleic acid molecules synthesized from the isolated RNA molecules, wherein the probe consists of a nucleotide sequence comprising a portion of the nucleotide sequence of the nucleic acid molecule of claim 2, or complements thereof, and

(b) detecting the formation of hybrids of the nucleic acid probe and either the test RNA molecules or the synthesized nucleic acid molecules,

wherein the presence of the hybrids indicates the presence of *zsell* RNA in the biological sample,

or,

(a') contacting the biological sample with an antibody, or an antibody fragment, which specifically binds with a polypeptide consisting of the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:2, wherein the contacting is performed under conditions that allow the binding of the antibody or antibody fragment to the biological sample, and

(b') detecting any of the bound antibody or bound antibody fragment.

12. A composition, comprising a carrier and the polypeptide of claim 1.